

20 May 2009

Notification of declining of proposal to list solifenacin (Vesicare) and mesalazine (Asamax) in the Pharmaceutical Schedule

PHARMAC wishes to inform that the PHARMAC Board has not accepted a proposal relating to the listing of solifenacin (Vesicare) and mesalazine (Asamax) in the Pharmaceutical Schedule. We note that this proposal was the subject of a consultation letter dated 27 November 2008.

We note that the proposal was that:

- solifenacin (Vesicare), a treatment for overactive bladder, was to be subsidised under Special Authority criteria; and
- the Asamax brand of mesalazine 500 mg long acting tablet was to be listed, and the Asacol and Pentasa brands were to be referenced price to this.

Details of the decision

During consultation PHARMAC received information regarding the suitability of reference pricing Pentasa to the Asamax formulation of mesalazine. After taking clinical advice the PHARMAC Board has declined the current proposal for listing of mesalazine and solifenacin.

We note that this decision does not mean that Vesicare or Asamax could not be listed in the Pharmaceutical Schedule in the future; however PHARMAC is not proposing to list them at this time.

Feedback received

We appreciate all of the feedback that we received and acknowledge the time people took to respond. All consultation received were considered in their entirety in making a decision on the proposed changes.

All responses were against the proposal, and the primary issue raised in relation to proposal was that Asamax and Pentasa have differing release characteristics and do not affect the same area of the gastro-intestinal tract. PHARMAC has taken clinical advice on this topic and consider in this particular case the differences in the release profiles would have a significant clinical implication.

No consultation responses were received in support of listing solifenacin during the consultation process.

More information

If you have any questions about this decision, you can call our toll free number (9 am to 5 pm, Monday to Friday) on 0800 66 00 50.